

M'NAMARA FINDS PEKING EXTENDING ITS ATOM THREAT

Predicts Ability to Attack
Nations in 700-Mile Range
Within 2 or 3 Years

EARLIER VIEW REVISED

China Speeding Capacity to
Back Words With Action,
Congress Unit Is Told

3/5/66
By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 7 —

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara predicted today that within two or three years Communist China would be capable of launching a nuclear attack on countries within 700 miles of China.

Testifying before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, Mr. McNamara expressed grave concern that China's growing nuclear arsenal indicated an intent by Peking to back up its belligerent words with actions.

From his estimates, it appeared that the arsenal was growing much faster than American officials expected.

After the first Chinese nuclear test in October, 1964, Mr. McNamara insisted that the explosion of what he described as a primitive nuclear device posed no military threat and contended that it would be "many years" before the Chinese "obtain the capability to inflict

nuclear damage on this country or our allies."

U.S. Still Out of Range

Mr. McNamara repeated estimates that it would be a decade or more before China could make a nuclear attack on the United States.

He said he was particularly "disturbed" about the power that its growing arsenal had given to China to support the "aggressive statements of her leaders."

As an example of such "aggressive statements" Mr. McNamara cited a policy declaration last fall by Defense Minister Lin Piao, setting forth the long-term objective of promoting "people's wars" throughout the Asian, African and American continents. On the basis of China's nuclear effort, it was Mr. McNamara's interpretation that these statements reflected a policy of aggressive intent and not just belligerent words.

Fulbright Sees Defense Idea

He noted that it had been pointed out that such statements were "but words, and words alone do not hurt us." But he reasoned that the fact that China, at considerable human and economic sacrifice, was developing a nuclear arsenal was an indication that it was moving "to support such words with instruments of war of the most terrible kind."

His statement appeared to rebut the repeated contention of Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, that China was "more ferocious" in words than in actions.

Asked later about Mr. McNamara's observations, Senator Fulbright said he felt that the aggressive stand of the Chinese Reds "could just as well be because they fear attack by coun-

Continued on Page 6, Column 3

M'NAMARA FINDS CHINA PERIL RISING

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

tries on their border who have nuclear power." He remarked that it was "just as natural for a country to seek its own defense" as to build for aggression.

Asked if he included the United States among the nations on China's border with nuclear weapons, Mr. Fulbright replied, "What do you consider 55,000 men in Korea?" While acknowledging that he did not know whether American troops in Korea were equipped with nuclear weapons, he said he assumed that the forces there "certainly would have access to them."

The Army has announced the stationing in Korea of artillery pieces capable of firing nuclear weapons.

Missile Peril Indicated

Mr. McNamara said China's two atomic explosions thus far were "but the foundation" for a nuclear arsenal that will permit it "to carry out aggression against weaker neighbors." In two or three years, he said, China will have a "warhead delivery capability" that will permit it to attack neighboring countries within 500 to 700 miles.

This range would include Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, all of Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent as far west as Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mr. McNamara did not specify how China would deliver the nuclear weapons, but he presumably was thinking of a missile capability. In his recent "military posture" presentation to Congress, he said China "probably has the capability to develop a medium-range ballistic missile." He also predicted that China "will



The New York Times March 8, 1966

Defense Secretary McNamara predicted that Communist China would be able to launch nuclear attack within three years on nations 700 miles from China (diagonal shading).

probably attempt to develop a thermonuclear device as soon as possible."

As China's nuclear capability grows, the Secretary noted, there will be increasing pressure from nations on its periphery for some assurance of protection against atomic attack.

Mr. McNamara, who appeared before the committee in support of a nonproliferation agreement, was more explicit than other Administration officials in emphasizing that any such treaty must be accompanied by some form of guarantees to the non-nuclear states against atomic "blackmail" or attack.

A treaty, he said, would be but one part of what must be a "comprehensive program" to prevent the spread of atomic

weapons. A "fundamental part" of such a program, he said, must be some form of protection to the nonnuclear states against nuclear attack or large-scale conventional attack.

But Mr. McNamara was less explicit on what form such guarantees should take, except to suggest that they should be extended multilaterally, through a strengthening of the United Nations or by some other international security arrangement.

His statements reflected the fact that bilateral assurances of protection, such as those offered by President Johnson after China's first explosion, have not proved acceptable to many of the nonnuclear states.

Because of her policy of non-alignment, India, for example, has been reluctant to accept the "nuclear umbrella" offered by

the United States and Britain. At the same time, India has run into difficulties in persuading the Soviet Union to join in a guarantee that would be aimed primarily at China.

As a result, Mr. McNamara said, the Administration has been giving "careful consideration to the problem of further assurances to the nonnuclear powers" and discussing the matter with other states.

The Administration hopes to come up with a counterproposal to the suggestion of Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin of the Soviet Union in January that the non-proliferation treaty provides that the nuclear states would protect the signatories against atomic attack.

The Soviet proposal has aroused considerable interest among the nonaligned states. But the Administration has reservations about it, partly because of fear that this would lead to disclosure of the location of American atomic weapons and thus perhaps lead to pressure for withdrawal of American weapons from foreign bases.

One idea under consideration by the Administration is for the guarantee to be extended by the United Nations, which could call upon the nuclear powers to enforce the guarantee.